

# Brendon Jiang case study

## Transcript (November 2016)

Hello my name's Brendon. I've been on the CPPE *General practice pharmacist training pathway* for about five months now, since July. My background is community pharmacy; I have 12 years of experience in community and I have worked up to the level of advanced practitioner. I was a Macmillan information pharmacist and I was able to provide all kinds of clinical services before joining the pilot.

In terms of the key responsibilities of my role, what really struck me is that every pilot site is different, so what I do isn't necessarily the same as what some of the other pharmacists do. What really scopes that for me is that I work across five different practices in sessions that last from two and half hours to five hours, so I don't have that continuity that some of my colleagues have and discussing with the practice managers and my supervisor we felt the way that I could make a best impact is primarily through face-to-face reviews with patients.

So I see my job as delivering the medicines optimisation agenda and the best way that I do that is checking on patients' understanding of their medicines and checking they are being monitored properly, checking they are using their medicines properly, so as I said most of my time is spent in face-to-face reviews with patients doing medication reviews, long-term condition monitoring. I've been doing quite a lot of domiciliary reviews with patients, so home visits, doing flu jabs and visiting a lot of care homes as well.

The other part of my time when I'm not seeing patients I spend I'm doing administrative tasks so conducting searches primarily to do with the safety of medications within practice, answering odd queries that have come by way of the doctors that I can lend my expertise to and reconciling some of the trickier discharges from secondary care and liaising with whoever I need to.

So on the pathway, the courses I have attended include the GPPTP induction residential, I have been to the type 2 diabetes, medicines optimisation and patient-centred care day, the care homes, medicines and older people day, the evidence-informed decision-making day and I'm looking forward to attending the using PRIMIS for quality improvement day and the clinical pharmacist update course.

Before I joined the pathway I had a real mix of emotions – nervousness and fear and trepidation I suppose about what exactly the role would entail and to an extent I still have that to be honest but I have a really burning optimism as we are forging a new pathway for pharmacy, it's no longer community and hospital; general practice is becoming a valid career pathway and it's very exciting to be a part of that and to change the way that primary care is delivered.

There have been a lot of challenges in my role. The one that really stands out I think is changing existing practice and getting the hearts and minds of not only patients but also your practice team, from the administrative in reception through to your colleagues, the practice nurses, healthcare systems and of course the GPs. I am very fortunate to work in a practice which is very progressive, but even then when GPs don't really understand what your strengths are and what you can bring and how you can help patients, it's every difficult to figure that out and express that but the training pathway has really helped in terms of we did lift pitches, but really bringing together all of the other practice pharmacists and sharing ideas helped and continues to help my practice.

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The most useful part of the pathway for me is providing structure. There are so many things when you get into the day job that can lead you astray but having the pathway really helps you to focus on what your development needs are and probably raise awareness of what exactly you are trying to deliver. So the main benefits have been that structure and working through various parts of the programme but also bringing together other pharmacists that are going through the same issues and challenges that you are and just being a sound board for you to get some moral support and to get advice.

I think my biggest success since starting on the pathway is to do with my clinics. Initially it was really difficult to recruit patients; I would do a lot of the recruiting myself, sending out invites from searches and I think part of the issue was that patients didn't really see the benefits that pharmacist could bring they didn't really understand the role. But as time has gone on, in the last month or so, my clinics have been full and I'm no longer driving that recruitment – it's coming from patients and its coming from my team, and I think the biggest step change that's driven that is that patients and my practice team are realising the benefits that expert medicines advice from a pharmacist can deliver. So I've had some glowing feedback from patients and from other GPs about my role and I really feel like I'm making a difference in practice and with patients.

So, how do I feel about my role now? Well, I'm more confident. I'm not the finished product, I don't think I'll ever be the finished product – the great thing about the pathway is that it really gives you structure and it allows you to pick out parts of your own practice that you want to develop and there will always be things that I'll need to work on but I'm confident that I have the tools that I need to work through any issues and a support group that will help me out if I need it. I'm really optimistic about what the future is going to bring, I'm looking forward to getting my prescribing and I'm looking forward to expanding my practice into new areas and I really can't wait to sink my teeth into some new development.